

REMARKS

I. Introduction

Claims 1, 4-5, 9, 13-14, 17-18, 26-27, 30-31, 39-40, 42-43 and 46-47 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Young et al. U.S. Patent 4,706,121 ("Young") in view of Richards et al. U.S. Patent 5,179,654 ("Richards").

Claims 2, 6, 7, 15, 19, 20, 28, 32, 33, 41, 44, and 45 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Young in view of Richards, and further in view of Palmer.

Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 14, 27 and 40 to more particularly define the claimed invention. Applicants have added new claims 52-55. Applicants' claim amendments and new claims do not introduce any new matter and are fully supported by the originally filed specification, for example at page 20, lines 10 to 11 and at page 21, line 14 to page 22, line 8. The Examiner's rejections are respectfully traversed.

II. The Rejections of Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 13-15, 17-20, 26-28, 30-33, and 39-47

Claims 1, 4-5, 13-14, 17-18, 26-27, 30-31, 39-40, 42-43 and 46-47 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Young in view of Richards. Claims 2,

6-7, 15, 19-20, 28, 32-33, 41 and 44-45 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Young in view of Richards, and further in view of Palmer. The Examiner's rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicants' invention as defined by independent claims 1, 14, 27, and 40 relates to providing help information that explains to a user of an electronic television program guide how the electronic television program guide operates. The program guide "track[s] a current operating mode of the electronic program guide" where the electronic television program guide has a plurality of operating modes. Claims 1, 14, 27 and 40, emphasis added. The operating modes may be, for example, a FLIP mode, a BROWSE mode, or a mode for impulse ordering or setting a lockout. A user input is received and in response to the user input, help information is provided. The help information that is provided is based on the current operating mode of the program guide.

Young relates to a TV schedule system and process that is able to display help information to a user. As pointed out by the Examiner, when the user selects key PG 224 on keyboard 220, help information is displayed at the bottom of the screen. See col. 12, lines 36-43. However, as conceded by the Examiner, Young does not show tracking a current operating mode and providing help information based on the tracked current operating mode. The Examiner, therefore, relies on Richards to show this feature.

The Examiner contends that the Richards system "tracks a current operating point of a menu, where the menu has a plurality of operating points" (e.g., the Help Map window) and provides "help information based on the current operating point (the keyboard or mouse location in the menu)". Office Action, page 3. The Examiner specifically refers to FIG. 1-4 and column 5, lines 8-25 and 46-64 of Richards. See Office Action, page 3. Applicants respectfully disagree.

As set forth in applicants' amended claims, a current operating mode of the electronic program guide is tracked. The Examiner contends that Richards' menu (e.g., the Help Map window) has a plurality of operating points. While a user of Richards may position a pointer or cursor on various parts of the menu, such functionality fails to show or suggest tracking a current operating mode of the software as defined in applicants' amended claims.

The functionality relied on by the Examiner instead shows providing help information based on the cursor or mouse pointer location within a menu. For example, the help map 80 of FIG. 8 of Richards includes various entries, including "Column Heading" entry 82. Richards states that the selection of entry 82 "causes the system variables to be reset to reflect those for the 'Column Heading' box and the replacement of the Help Text in window 84 by new text relating to Column headings." Col. 10, lines 10-13.

In view of the foregoing, Richards does not track a current operating mode of the software. Rather, Richards sets system variables based on the selection of an entry on a menu and then these variables are used to extract the appropriate help information. See col. 2, line 49 to col. 3, line 12.

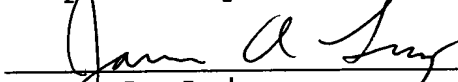
Thus Richards does not disclose, teach, or suggest tracking a current operating mode of the electronic program guide and providing help information based on the current operating mode, as recited in amended independent claims 1, 14, 27, and 40.

Accordingly, for at least the foregoing reasons, applicants submit that independent claims 1, 14, 27, and 40 and dependent claims 2, 4-7, 9, 13, 15, 17-20, 22, 26, 28, 30-33, 35, 39, and 41-47 should be found allowable over Young and Richards. Therefore, the rejections of claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9, 13-15, 17-20, 22, 26-28, 30-33, 35, and 39-47 should be withdrawn.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9, 13-15, 17-20, 22, 26-28, 30-33, 35, 39-47 and 52-55 are in condition for allowance. This application is therefore in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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